

to also consider that atrial fibrillation is the leading cause of severe stroke, but if properly treated, the risk of stroke can be dramatically reduced. Atrial fibrillation causes only 15 percent of all stroke, however it leads to a much higher rate of debilitating outcomes for patients resulting in their need for long-term care and increasing the burden on our health care system.

Atrial fibrillation is a condition where the atrium of the heart does not pump blood out properly into the ventricle causing the blood to pool in the atrial chamber. The pooling leads to the formation of clots, which can break off and travel into the arteries and to the brain where it may lodge causing a severe stroke.

Atrial fibrillation currently affects over 2.3 million people in the United States. However, the number of those effected will increase significantly as the population ages and improvements in the treatment of other forms of heart disease are made, extending their life expectancy but increasing their chances of developing atrial fibrillation.

The Committee urges the Secretary to recognize that strokes caused by atrial fibrillation are preventable through the use of anticoagulation medications. The use of anticoagulation medications have been shown to reduce the risk of stroke caused by atrial fibrillation by over 68 percent. The American Heart Association, American College of Cardiology, American College of Chest Physicians, American College of Physicians and American Academy of Family Practitioners have all issued guidelines stressing the importance of stroke prevention in atrial fibrillation by the proper use of anticoagulation therapy.

However, a significant number of patients who should be on anticoagulation therapy do not receive the proper medication. Given the severity of stroke in patients with atrial fibrillation and the ability of the proper care to prevent strokes it is important that health care professionals are educated about the current guidelines for treatment and there is an increased public awareness of atrial fibrillation.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO DENNIS BRINKER

HON. SCOTT MCINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 15, 2004

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to Dennis Brinker and thank him for his exceptional contributions to his community and the State of Colorado as a Jackson County Commissioner. A four-term commissioner, Dennis will always be remembered as a dedicated public servant and leader of his community. As Dennis celebrates his retirement, let it be known that he leaves behind a terrific legacy of commitment to the people of Jackson County and the State of Colorado.

A lifelong resident of North Park, Dennis has lived and worked on a ranch near Coalmont that was homesteaded by his father in 1914. Graduating from Jackson County High School in 1961, he answered his country's call to duty, serving in the U.S. Army from 1962 to 1965. In 1988, he was elected to the Board of Commissioners of Jackson County where he has dedicated his efforts to serving

the people of Jackson County. Some of the committees and boards Dennis serves on include the Western Interstate Region Board of Directors, National Association of County Officials Public Lands Committee. He was chairman of the Colorado Counties Incorporated Public Lands Committee, and is a member of the Western Interstate Region Strategic Plan for National Association of County Officials Steering Committee. He is also a member of the North Park Stockgrowers Association, Colorado Cattlemen Association, and Jackson County Lions Club.

Mr. Speaker, it is clear that County Commissioner Dennis Brinker has ceaselessly dedicated his time and efforts to serving his county and the people of Colorado as a County Commissioner for Jackson County. I am honored to bring his hard work and commitment to the attention of this body of Congress and this nation today. Thank you for all your service Dennis and I wish you and your wife Mary Lea all the best in your future endeavors.

PATRIOTS' RESILIENCE LEADS TO TITLE

HON. HOWARD COBLE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 15, 2004

Mr. COBLE. Mr. Speaker, as major league baseball is in full swing, I would like to take a moment to congratulate a high school in the Sixth District of North Carolina that won a state girls' softball championship. It was not an easy road for the Southern Alamance girls' softball team, but in the end, it was certainly a rewarding one. After losing the first game of the championship round in 10 innings, the Patriots found themselves facing a winner take all game at the Walnut Creek Softball Complex. "I don't expect anything easy with them (his team)," Head Coach Mike Johnson told the Burlington Times-News. In continuing this trend of close games and tension filled finishes, Southern Alamance defeated Enka High School 8-6 in yet another 10 inning battle. Despite the Patriots' history of drama, this title should come as no surprise after a combined record of 30-2 for the year.

One of the key performers during the two day tournament run was senior pitcher Brooke Isley who handled 39 innings and struck out 59 batters. It was Isley who closed out the final game by retiring three straight hitters. This capped off a come from behind victory that was initially sparked by Amanda Johnson's base hit and ensuing RBI from Marybeth Ingle. "We couldn't make anything easy," Isley explained to a local reporter. Perhaps the biggest scare for the Patriots came in the 9th inning when an Enka base runner was thrown out at the plate keeping Southern Alamance's hopes alive. Finally in the 10th inning, with runners in scoring position, Marybeth Ingle came up with, what would be, the deciding hit to secure the title.

This was a special win for the Patriots who were led by a number of senior players. Carla Roger, Whitney Lambe, Amanda Hodge, Brooke Isley, Marybeth Ingle, Maegan Evans, and Stacey Vaughn all finished there high school careers on top. These girls had the help of a strong supporting cast comprised of Tori Thompson, Kim Pardue, Brittany McPher-

son, Brittany Thompson, Magan Campbell, Amanda Johnston, Bethany Hawks, Brandi Haithcock, Ariel Bullock, Amanda Cline, Leslie Scott, Daveda Fox, Tiffany Helton, Erika Winebarger, Kristen Burgess, Olivia McPher-son, Kristen Roach, April Carver, and Janna Holt.

After such a remarkable season much credit goes to the Southern Alamance coaching staff who guided the Patriots to the championship. Congratulations to Head Coach Mike Johnson and assistant coaches Chris Miller, Cully Lambeth, Mike Thompson and John Miller. Further recognition should be awarded to Principal Kent Byrd and Athletic Director David Vaughn after this memorable season. On behalf of the citizens of the Sixth District of North Carolina, we congratulate the Patriots of Southern Alamance for winning the state 3-A girls' softball championship.

TRIBUTE TO RICHARD CARRIÓN

HON. JOSÉ E. SERRANO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 15, 2004

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to pay tribute to Mr. Richard Carrión, who served as a National Grand Marshall for the Puerto Rican Day Parade in New York City on June 13, 2004 and has promoted the Puerto Rican Community in all of his life's work.

Richard was born in San Juan, Puerto Rico in November of 1952. He received a Bachelor's degree from the Wharton School of Finance and Commerce at the University of Pennsylvania and a Masters degree in Management Information Systems from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. In 1976 he began working for Banco Popular, the leading banking institution in Puerto Rico. In his early years, he oversaw the installation of the ATM system throughout the extensive branch network in Puerto Rico and the United States. Today, I am proud to say that Richard serves as president and CEO of the company.

Mr. Speaker, empowerment of the Puerto Rican people remains one of Richard's top priorities. He serves as president of the Committee for the Economic Development of Puerto Rico and actively participates on the boards of several other civic organizations committed to solving problems on the island.

In 1990 Richard was named a member of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and has been named to several of its commissions including chairman of the Finance Commission and member of the TV and Internet Rights and Marketing Commissions. In addition, he has served as a member of the Puerto Rico Olympic Committee, president of the Puerto Rico Olympic Trust and as a member of the 2004 Olympiad, a non-profit organization that sought to garner international support for Puerto Rico's efforts to stage the 2004 Olympic Games.

Mr. Speaker, what impresses me the most about this remarkable man is his willingness to put his knowledge to work for the benefit of Puerto Ricans. For his extraordinary achievements and his outstanding service to the people of Puerto Rico, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring this outstanding man.